

Message Text

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SUBJECT: SOCIALIST PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING CONFIRMS SUPPORT
FOR MORO GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY: THE SOCIALIST (PSI) CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING,
SECEMBER 11-13, IS EXPECTED TO CLOSE WITH APPROVAL OF
SECRETARY DEMARTINO'S REPORT, CONFIRMING SUPPORT FOR THE
MORO GOVERNMENT, BUT VIRTUALLY EXCLUDING A RETURN TO A
SOUR-PARTY CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT AS ITS EVENTUAL SUCCESSOR.
THE CENTER-LEFT FORMULA ITSELF IS CALLED QUOTE ANACHRONISTIC
UNQUOTE. DEMARTINO PROPOSES IN ITS PLACE A NEW RELATIONSHIP
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WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC) ON THE BASIS OF

EQUALITY, WITH OTHER PARTIES BEING IRRELEVANT TO THE COALITION. SHORT-TERM STRATEGY CALLS FOR MODERATION TO KEEP THE MORO GOVERNMENT IN POWER TO AVOID POSTPONEMENT OF THE SPRING REGIONAL ELECTIONS. IN THE LONGER TERM, DEMARTINO GIVES PRIORITY TO INCREASING THE PARTY'S ELECTORAL STRENGTH AND IMAGE OF RESPONSIBILITY, THEREBY TO BRING A CHANGE IN THE BALANCE OF POWER VIS-A-VIS BOTH THE DC AND THE PCI. END SUMMARY.

1. SOCIALIST (PSI) PARTY SECRETARY DEMARTINO'S OPENING ADDRESS TO THE SOCIALIST CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING, DECEMBER 11-13, PROVIDES AN AUTHORITATIVE VIEW OF THE SOCIALIST ASSESSMENT OF THE RECENT CRISIS AND THE PARTY'S ROLE FOR THE IMMEDIATE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE. DEMARTINO, WHILE REAFFIRMING QUOTE FIRM AND LOYAL UNQUOTE SUPPORT FOR MORO GOVERNMENT, EMPHASIZES THAT SOCIALIST SUPPORT DOES NOT DERIVE FROM ANY FOUR-PARTY ALLIANCE, BUT IS GIVEN DIRECTLY TO MORO AND HIS PROGRAM, TO ASSIST HIM IN CONFRONTING THE COUNTRY'S PRESENT DIFFICULTIES. HE TERMED THE ORGANIC CENTER-LEFT FORMULA QUOTE ANACHRONISTIC UNQUOTE, AND DEPLORED DC REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE THAT QUOTE NEW FORMS UNQUOTE ARE NEEDED. THE OUTCOME OF THE CRISIS WAS A VICTORY IN THE SENSE THAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT (PSDI) AND RIGHT-WING DC ATTEMPTS TO BRING ABOUT EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS WERE FRUSTRATED, BUT DEMARTINO ADMITTED THAT PSI OBJECTIVES WERE ONLY PARTIALLY REALIZED.

2. THE NECESSARY QUOTE NEW FORMS UNQUOTE THE DC SHOULD ADOPT, DEMARTINO MAKES CLEAR, ARE NEW RELATIONS WITH THE PSI, BASED ON EQUALITY INSTEAD OF DC HEGEMONY. SHOULD OTHER QUOTE SMALL, LAY UNQUOTE PARTIES WISH TO JOIN IN, THERE WOULD BE NO OBJECTION, BUT DEMARTINO PUTS IT CLEARLY THAT THEY WOULD BE MERE APPENDAGES.

3. TO BRING ABOUT A PSI-DC EQUAL ALLIANCE IN THE FACE OF THE LATTER'S INTERNAL DIVISIONS AND CONSISTENT REFUSAL TO CHOOSE, THE PSI MUST CONTINUE TO INCREASE ITS STRENGTH AND ESTABLISH ITS IMAGE IN THE COUNTRY AS QUOTE A RELIABLE AND STABLE PARTY, RESPONSIBLE IN ITS DECISIONS UNQUOTE, CAPABLE NOT ONLY OF REPRESENTING THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE

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WORKING CLASSES,, BUT ALSO OF ENCOMPASSING THE POSITIVE ROLE OF THE PRODUCTIVE MIDDLE CLASSES, QUOTE THAT IS, OF MEDIUM AND SMALL INDUSTRY UNQUOTE.

4. DEMARTINO IMPLICIT REBUTTED THOSE IN HIS PARTY WHO HAVE BEEN CALLING OPENLY FOR A HARD OPPOSITION TOWARD THE DC AND/OR A RETURN TO A COMMON FRONT WITH THE PCI. HE REVIEWED AT LENGTH THE ELECTORAL SUCCESSES OF THE PARTY

SINCE 1973 WHICH HE ATTRIBUTED TO THE PARTY'S ACQUIRED CHARACTER AS A QUOTE GOVERNMENT UNQUOTE PARTY. HIS ADDRESS WAS REplete WITH ADMONITIONS OF THE NEED FOR CAUTION, POLITICAL REALISM, FLEXIBILITY, AND QUOTE REASONABLE UNQUOTE PATIENCE, IN PURSUING THE POLICIES HE PROPOSED. THE MOST DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCE OF HARD OPPOSITION TO THE DC WOULD BE A QUOTE VIOLENT CONFRONTATION UNQUOTE FORCING THE DC IN ITS ENTIRETY TO THE RIGHT, AND ENDANGERING DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. TO ALLOW THIS TO OCCUR WOULD BE AN QUOTE ERROR OF HISTORICAL DIMENSION UNQUOTE.

5. THE THORNIEST ISSUE IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING PROVED TO BE THE DATE OF THE UPCOMING PSI CONGRESS, WHICH SHOULD NORMALLY TAKE PLACE IN FEBRUARY OR MARCH. CONTRARY TO DEMARTINO'S PERSONAL PREFERENCE, MOST PREFER TO DEFER IT UNTIL OCTOBER TO AVOID THE DANGER THAT THE RESULTS OF THE CONGRESS MIGHT CAUSE THE DC TO DECIDE THAT ITS ELECTORAL FORTUNES WOULD BE BETTER SERVED AFTER ALL BY FORCEING EARLY DISSOLUTION OF THE PARLIAMENT AND NEW ELECTIONS. ANOTHER REASON, FAVORED BY THE MANCINI OPPOSITION FACTION, IS THAT DEMARTINO IS EXPECTED TO BE MORE VULNERABLE AFTER THE REGIONAL ELECTIONS. DEMARTINO HAS INDICATED THAT HE WILL NOT MAKE AN ISSUE OF THE TIMING OF THE CONGRESS.

COMMENT: STATEMENTS BY PARTY FACTION LEADERS IN THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE DEBATE REVEAL A WIDE CONSENSUS THAT THE FOUR-PARTY CENTER-LEFT HAS FINISHED ITS USEFULNESS, AND A SOMEWHAT SMALLER MAJORITY CONSENSUS THAT AN EQUAL, BIPOLAR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DC SHOULD BE SUBSTITUTED. DEMARTINO DID NOT REACT DIRECTLY TO PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER'S PROPOSAL FOR A DIALECTIC CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS. HE ONLY STATED THAT THE PROPOSED OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING PSI STRENGTH WAS TO NARROW ITS DISTANCE FROM

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THE PCI, AS WELL AS THE DC, THROUGH A CHANGE IN THE BALANCE OF FORCES. ONLY A SMALL LEFT-WING MINORITY OPENLY CALLS FOR A RETURN TO A COMMON FRONT WITH THE PCI. MOST ACCEPT, OPENLY OR IMPLICITLY, THE DEMARTINO FACTION'S VIEW THAT SUCH A MOVE NOW WOULD INEVITABLY SUBMIT THE PSI TO PCI HEGEMONY. IF DEMARTINO'S GENERAL LINE PREVAILS, AS NOW SEEMS LIKELY, THE PSI WILL GIVE TOP PRIORITY TO THE SPRING REGIONAL ELECTIONS, TAKING CARE THAT ITS CRITICAL SUPPORT OF THE MORO GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INADVERTENTLY BRING IT DOWN IN THE MEANTIME. VOLPE

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